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9 May 1959

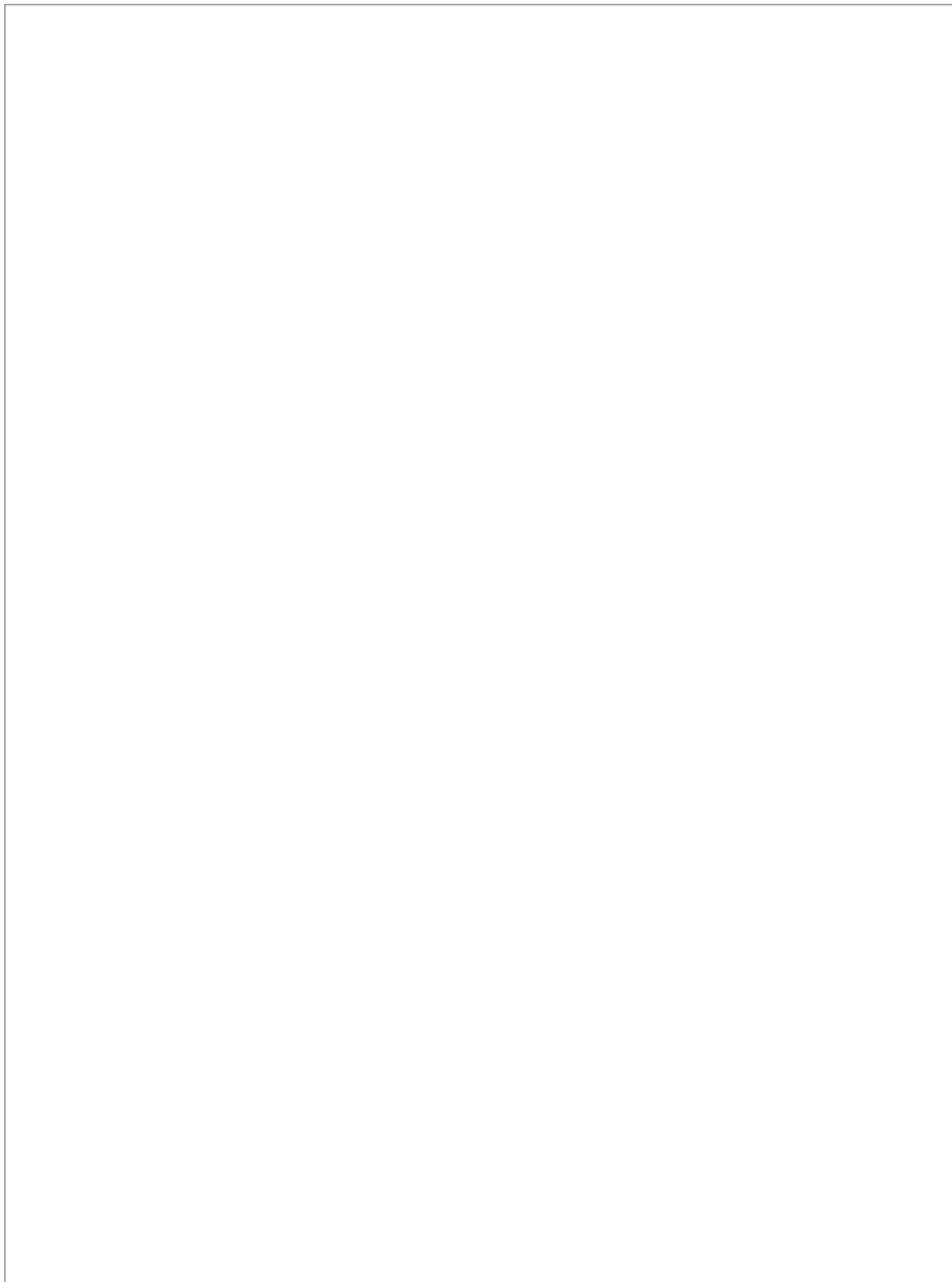
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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN



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9 MAY 1959

I. THE COMMUNIST BLOC

USSR planning to raise procedural problems at opening of foreign ministers' conference.

USSR might attempt to launch space vehicle toward Venus in early June.

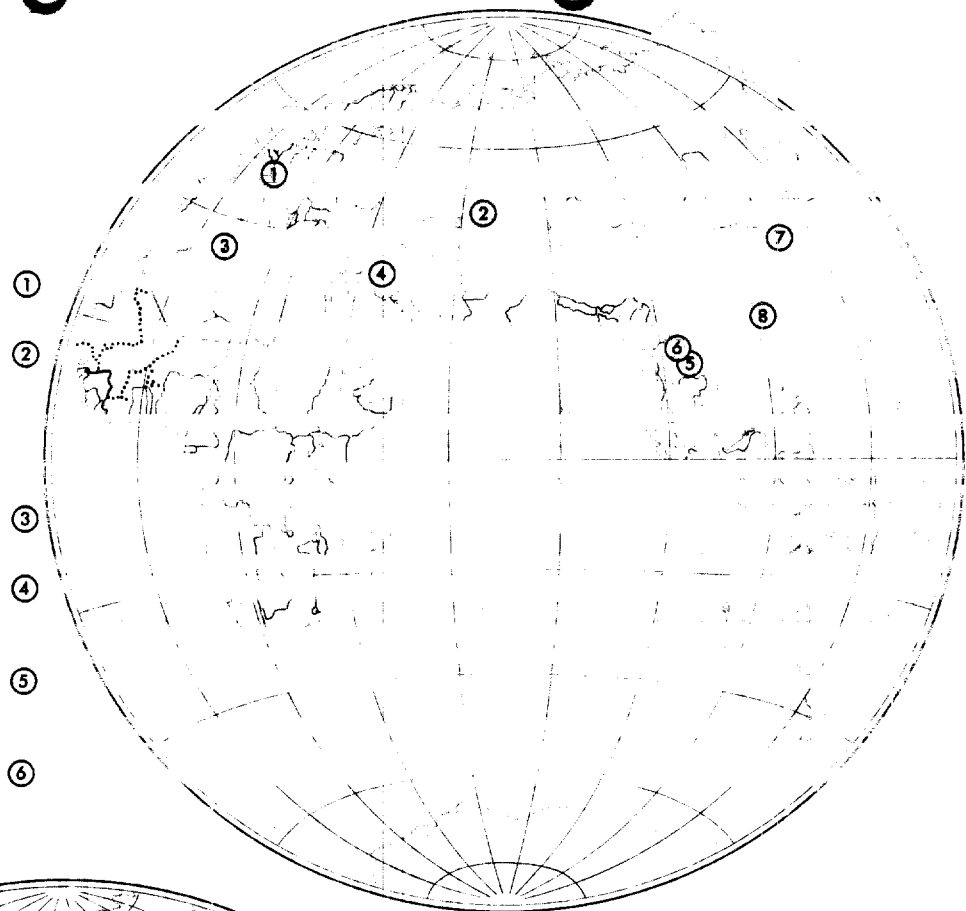
II. ASIA-AFRICA

Algerian rebels seek to counter military setbacks by embroiling Tunisians with French Army.

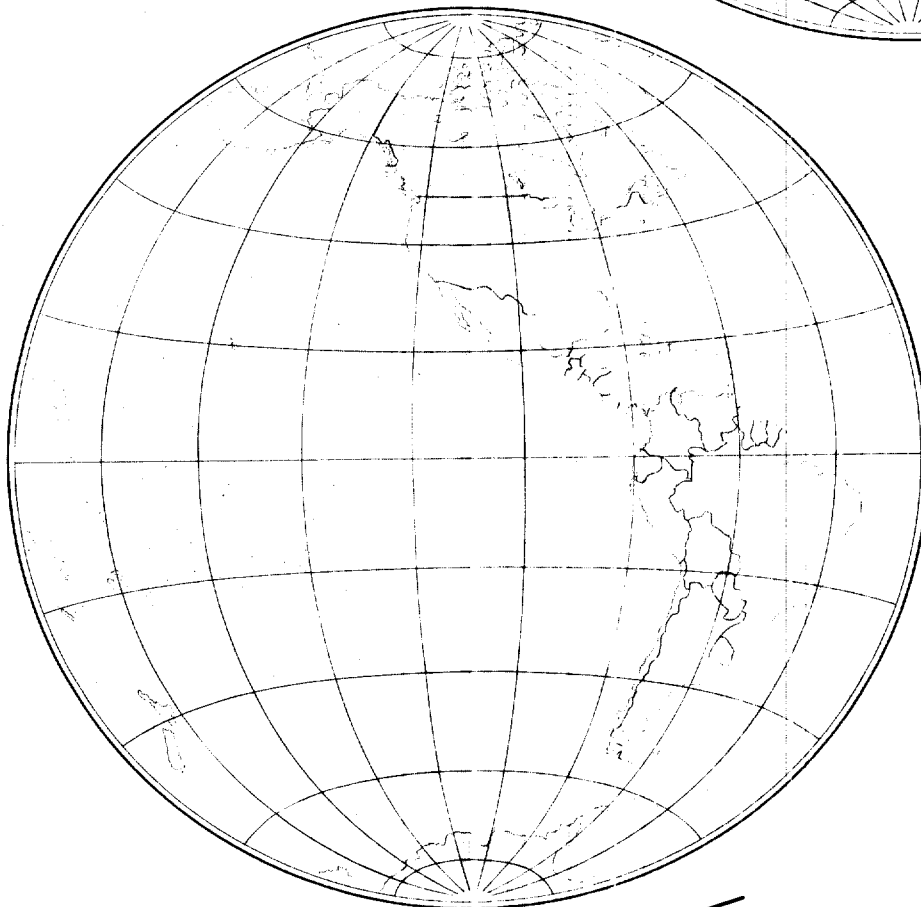
Qasim may be planning federal system for Iraqi minorities.

Thailand plans Red Cross talks with North Vietnam on repatriation of Vietnamese refugees.

Laotian officials oppose continued French control of Laotian army training.



- ⑦ South Korean Coast Guard attempts seizure of Japanese fishing craft outside "Rhee line."
- ⑧ Chiang Kai-shek will retain presidency beyond expiration of second term next year.



TOP SECRET

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN

9 May 1959

DAILY BRIEF

SIRAB

I. THE COMMUNIST BLOC

N/O

Geneva foreign ministers' meeting: Soviet preconference tactics suggest that Moscow plans a number of procedural skirmishes at the foreign ministers' conference before discussing substantive issues. The Soviet member of the group making final technical arrangements for the conference cited the absence of agreement on participation in the conference, including the status of the two German delegations, and said this should be settled by the ministers before the first meeting. He argued that the German delegations should be seated with the four great powers. [redacted]

[redacted] (Page 1)

K/O

Soviet space activity: There is some possibility that the USSR will attempt a probe of the planet Venus in early June, the time affording the most favorable conditions of the next two years. [redacted] (Page 3)

II. ASIA-AFRICA

OK

delete last sentence

Algerian rebels - Tunisia - France: The Algerian rebels, apparently beset by mounting military difficulties, show increasing dissatisfaction with the support they are receiving from Tunisia. Increasingly vigorous French Army operations are occurring along the Algerian-Tunisian frontier, and Tunisian forces have reportedly clashed on several recent occasions with both French and Algerian rebel soldiers. A major incident would require Tunisian President Bourguiba to make a sharp diplomatic countermove, possibly involving the French base at Bizerte and a resort to the Security Council. [redacted]

(Page 4)

TOP SECRET [redacted]

OK
Iraq: [redacted] Iraqi Prime Minister Qasim has held meetings with representatives of the Assyrian minority to discuss the formation of a "federal republic" of Iraq composed of separate semi-autonomous minority republics. He is reported to have had similar meetings with Kurdish and Turkoman leaders, all of whom are said to have reacted favorably. Such a plan would conform with Qasim's already declared policy of affording a larger role to the minorities in Iraq, and could serve as a device for creating unrest in neighboring countries with similar minority problems.] [redacted]

[redacted] (Page 6)

OK
Thailand - North Vietnam: Thailand apparently has agreed to direct talks between its National Red Cross organization and the North Vietnamese Red Cross on repatriating the bulk of the predominantly pro-Communist 50,000 Vietnamese refugees in northeast Thailand. Such talks would represent an important departure from Bangkok's policy of avoiding any direct contact with Communist North Vietnam and, if successful, would give Hanoi a major propaganda victory at the expense of the Diem regime in South Vietnam. [redacted] (Page 7)

NO
Laos: [redacted] Laotian officials appear adamant in their opposition to continued French control of Laotian Army training, despite French claims that the Laotians prefer French training. The Laotian leaders identify the French Army with defeat in the Indo-China war and also object to what they consider the "colonial arrogance" and inefficiency of French officers. Paris, preparing for early US-French talks on the problem, insists that any American role be limited to "technical training," with only French personnel supervising combat training.] [redacted]

[redacted] (Page 8)

NO
South Korea - Japan: [redacted]

[redacted] Seoul has resumed efforts to seize Japanese fishing craft. A South Korean Coast Guard ship [redacted] reported an attempt--the first since January--to seize a group of Japanese boats in the Tsushima Straits, well outside the arbitrarily established "Rhee line." [redacted]

(Page 9)

9 May 59

DAILY BRIEF

ii

TOP SECRET [redacted]

OK
Nationalist China: [Chiang Ching-kuo, son of President Chiang Kai-shek, stated flatly on 6 May that his father would retain his post as President after his present term expires in 1960. There had been earlier indications that he would step down. The constitutional ban against a third term presumably will be overcome by a "juridical interpretation." The President's intentions may be announced at the Kuomintang central committee meeting scheduled to begin on 15 May.]

[redacted]
(Page 10)

9 May 59

DAILY BRIEF

iii

~~TOP SECRET~~ [redacted]

I. THE COMMUNIST BLOC

Soviet Tactics at Geneva

Soviet preconference tactics suggest that Moscow plans a number of procedural skirmishes at the foreign ministers' conference before opening substantive discussions. The USSR apparently is attempting to force the ministers to meet before the opening session to discuss outstanding procedural questions including composition. The Soviet member of the four-power group responsible for technical arrangements in Geneva stated on 7 May that nothing could take place until the ministers had decided who should participate in the first meeting, and he flatly asserted that the Germans should be seated at the table. He also rejected a square-shaped conference table on the grounds that it would "prevent more than four participating powers." Already, Soviet propaganda has begun to refer to the talks as "the round-table conference in Geneva."

Soviet notes of 30 March had stated that the question of Polish and Czech "participation" could be settled at the conference itself, and that the question of the "representation" of the two German states was a "decided matter." This vague wording was accepted as indicating a desire not to obstruct the convening of a foreign ministers' conference by prior insistence on the composition; it reserved the USSR's right, however, to bring this matter up as soon as the conference convened. There have been hints that the USSR may intend to bring the nuclear test cessation issue before the foreign ministers' conference.

[The Soviet delegate to the nuclear test talks asked the British delegate on 6 May for his views on the possibility of putting some of the unresolved issues of test suspension before the foreign ministers. Again, on 7 May he stated that the question of continuing sessions during the foreign ministers' conference would depend to a great extent on whether the ministers discuss the test cessation issue.] Soviet leaders may anticipate that, by introducing the nuclear test issue at the foreign ministers'

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conference, they can obtain agreement in principle for their present proposal at the Geneva nuclear test talks for a pre-determined quota of annual on-site inspections of phenomena suspected of having been nuclear explosions. They could then maintain that the actual number of annual inspections would be a suitable subject for discussion and agreement at the summit.

The counselor of the Soviet Embassy in Paris suggested to a US official that the USSR would be willing to guarantee the Berlin status quo in return for a reduction in Allied forces there, and an agreement to cease subversive activities in both East and West Berlin. Apart from Berlin, he said, the main points for discussion should be a German peace treaty and force reductions in Central Europe, taking into account the 1954 Paris agreements forbidding German development and possession of atomic weapons. He added that all parties would have to recognize the Oder-Neisse boundary.

In East Berlin.

the expected failure of the foreign ministers' conference would bring about an immediate summit meeting in which something can be achieved. He gave as examples a permanent ban on atomic test; prohibition of atomic weapons for West Germany; an atom free zone or disengagement in Central Europe; a readiness to discuss "some kind of peace treaty with the Germans." Agreement could also be reached to continue such discussions in the future, but if the summit talks failed, the USSR would be forced to sign a separate peace treaty.

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Soviet Venus Probe Attempt Possible in Near Future

Professor L. I. Sedov, prominent as a Soviet space research spokesman, said during a recent visit to New Zealand on a cultural exchange mission that the USSR plans to launch a rocket toward Venus, and that he hoped it would occur soon.

The US has announced that it will not attempt a Venus probe in early June, when the proximity of the earth and Venus create favorable conditions which will not be duplicated for about another two years. The optimum period for such a Soviet shot would be 8 June, plus or minus four days. Sedov's statement suggests that the Soviet Union might make the attempt at this time. [REDACTED]

The present pattern of missile range activity [REDACTED] [REDACTED] is not inconsistent with the general patterns which have led up to the previous space shots; the extended practice, together with the absence of any actual space attempts since January, suggests preparations for some type of unusual shot. There may, however, be more than one test in progress and preparations for a Soviet Venus probe attempt would not necessarily rule out another earlier operation at Tyura Tam.

A successful probe toward the planet Venus, the first launch toward a companion planet in the solar system, would demonstrate significant Soviet advances in propulsion, guidance, and celestial mechanics. Following the progress of such a space vehicle would require a remarkable capability in communications and tracking. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

~~TOP SECRET~~ [REDACTED]

Prospects Increasing for Serious Incident in Algerian-Tunisian Border Area

Prospects for a serious incident involving French action against Algerian rebels on Tunisian soil are increasing as a result of vigorous operations by French units based in Algeria in the Tunisian-Algerian border area. Such an incident, especially if it should involve Tunisian military or civilian personnel could lead to a major crisis in French-Tunisian relations. President Bourguiba would probably feel compelled to make a sharp diplomatic countermove, possibly including an appeal to the UN Security Council and a demand for the evacuation of the French naval base at Bizerte.

While border incidents involving violations of Tunisian territory by French forces have been commonplace for some time, they seem to be multiplying as French forces push rebel troops in eastern Algeria closer to Tunisia, increasing the temptation for French commanders to pursue rebel units which cross the frontier. In one such recent instance the French military killed more than 30 Algerians in Tunisia, according to the French minister in Tunis. At least one direct clash between French and Tunisian troops on Tunisian soil has also been reported.

At the same time, the border-area situation appears to be imposing a heavy strain on Tunisian relations with the rebels, who have for some time been displaying increasing dissatisfaction with the support they are receiving from Tunisia, and particularly with Tunisian efforts to restrict rebel activities there. []

[] Tunisian and rebel troops had clashed on 1 May in northwestern Tunisia, and the chief of staff of the Tunisian Army has admitted that Tunisian National Guard units deployed in the border region are not on good terms with the Algerians.

The subject of relations with the Tunisians will probably figure prominently in discussions among top Algerian political

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and military leaders which are apparently about to get under way in Tunis. Tunisian officials have already indicated to the American Embassy in Tunis that they are being pressed by the Algerians for more aggressive support, and that some Algerians are urging the Tunisians to become co-belligerents. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

~~TOP SECRET~~ [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Reported Plan for Semi-Autonomous Minority States in Iraq

[On 29 April Premier Qasim is reported to have expounded to leaders of Iraq's 25,000 Assyrian minority a plan for transformation of the country into a federal republic. This would allegedly consist of a central Arab republic and three separate semi-autonomous republics for the Kurdish, Turkoman, and Assyrian minorities. Each of the minority republics would control its own internal affairs, create and staff its own local government machinery, and police its own area. Each, however, would be federally united with the Central Arab Republic in matters of foreign affairs, finance, and over-all national defense. Members of the three minority groups who now live in nearby countries would be invited to return to Iraq to take up residence in the new semi-autonomous republics, a move which might create trouble in Iran, Syria, and Turkey.]

[The Assyrian leaders reportedly think this scheme is supported by the British, since it allegedly is similar to an old British proposal. Moreover, influential groups in the 800,000 Kurdish minority have long been advocating this type of system as the first step on their way to complete independence. The 75,000 Turkomen, who are being assimilated into the Arab majority gradually but more readily than most other minorities, would nevertheless probably like the plan.]

[The many and formidable problems of implementing such a plan would include reallocation of land and uprooting of people on a major scale. There would be danger of increasing the strong antipathies between these minority groups, as well as the risk that, granted semi-autonomy, they would press for full independence. Other large minorities and tribal confederations might well seek autonomous status for themselves.] [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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Thailand Plans Red Cross Talks With North Vietnam on Refugees

The Thai Government has accepted Hanoi's proposal for direct talks between the Thai and North Vietnamese National Red Cross chapters concerning the possible repatriation of the bulk of the 50,000 predominantly pro-Communist Vietnamese refugees in northeast Thailand, according to the Bangkok World, a usually reliable English-language daily. This climaxes months of serious consideration of the refugee problem by Thai authorities and on-the-scene observation of the refugee communities by a representative of the International Committee for the Red Cross. Bangkok reportedly will select its delegates to the conference next week, but the location is still undecided, with North Vietnam apparently favoring Geneva and Thailand arguing for a nearby neutral country.

Talks between the respective National Red Cross chapters of the two countries would represent a departure from Thailand's policy of avoiding any contacts with Communist North Vietnam, attesting to the importance Marshal Sarit attaches to solution of this long-standing security problem. The Thais may also have become convinced that current talks in Geneva of a similar nature between the Japanese and North Korean Red Cross chapters have provided them with a precedent which will minimize any adverse reaction from Thailand's Western allies.

There is some chance the talks may break down, particularly over arrangements for screening the refugees; however, if they should succeed, North Vietnam will achieve a major propaganda victory at the expense of the Diem regime in South Vietnam, which had earlier refused to accept the refugees.

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Laos Seeking Replacement of French in Military Training Role

[On the eve of US-French negotiations in Paris on military training responsibilities in Laos, Laotian leaders remain strongly opposed to continued French control of army training, preferring American instruction instead. They identify the French Army with defeat at Dien Bien Phu and object to what they describe as the colonial arrogance and inefficiency of French officers. Laotian delegations to South Vietnam, by way of contrast, have been greatly impressed by the rapid progress of the Vietnamese armed forces under US guidance.]

[France is willing to turn over logistical training of the Laotian Army to the United States, but is strongly opposed to American participation in combat training. This position stems from France's desire to maintain its influence in Laos through its integral military role and from its concern over Communist reaction to any such "flagrant violation of the 1954 Geneva agreements," which Paris insists are still valid in Laos. The French apparently are confident that a bilateral accord reached with the US at Paris can be imposed on Laos without difficulty.]

[Until this problem is solved, effective training of the 24,000-man Laotian Army will continue to be delayed. The Phoui government is counting heavily on the army to implement its anti-Communist reform program.]

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South Korea Resumes Attempted Seizures of Japanese Fishing Craft

South Korea has attempted to resume seizures of Japanese fishing boats, apparently in a display of irritation over Tokyo's refusal to break off negotiations in Geneva with the North Koreans over the repatriation of Koreans in Japan. Seoul has demanded an end to the Geneva talks as a prerequisite for resuming discussions on the normalization of Japanese - South Korean relations, but has offered no substantive concessions itself. The last seizure of Japanese fishing boats occurred last January. About 153 Japanese fishermen are being held by South Korea for violation of the unilaterally imposed "Rhee line"--which extends as much as 60 miles beyond the South Korean coast line.

Talks between Japan and South Korea in Tokyo were recessed last February after Japanese Foreign Minister Fujiyama announced that Japan would permit the voluntary repatriation of Koreans in Japan to North Korea. Seoul has threatened strong retaliatory measures should the repatriation actually take place.

Subsequent negotiations in Geneva between Japanese and North Korean Red Cross officials to determine arrangements for the repatriation appear to have made little progress thus far. Tokyo is insisting that the International Committee of the Red Cross participate in the repatriation program to assure that none of the Koreans are repatriated involuntarily. Pyongyang claims that petitions signed by some 117,000 Korean residents constitute sufficient evidence of their intentions and that only technical problems related to travel and finance need to be solved.

Despite the lack of progress in the Geneva talks, the Kishi government is reluctant to break them off prior to the 2 June upper-house elections because of the Japanese public's strong support for repatriation and continued hope for success in the talks. Tokyo is willing, however, to resume negotiations with South Korea if the latter indicates its willingness to negotiate seriously on the "Rhee line" and captive Japanese fishermen.

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Chiang Kai-Shek Reportedly to Retain Chinese
Nationalist Presidency

[There has been much speculation as to the President's intentions following his statement last December that he was opposed to amending the constitution to permit a third term. Supporters of Chen Cheng, the vice president and presumed successor to the presidency if Chiang Kai-shek steps down, have asserted that a third term would require a constitutional amendment and that no such attempt would be made. It therefore seems likely that there has been an internal struggle between Chen Cheng and Chiang Ching-kuo over this point, with Ching-kuo seeking to ensure his father's re-election to block the increasing power of Chen Cheng. Chen Cheng has probably been seeking to uphold the constitution in a bid for the presidency.]

[If Chiang Kai-shek intends to run again, it is possible that an announcement to this effect will be made at the meeting of the Kuomintang central committee scheduled for 15 May. There was a report in late April that an attempt would be made to line up support for a third term at this meeting.]

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